

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 EB-07 AID-05 IGA-02 COME-00 TRSE-00

OMB-01 MCT-01 PC-01 /087 W
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P R 181505Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8747

INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BR

SUBJECT: MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS: FIRST SCATTERED INDICATORS FAVOR
ARENA AFTER QUIET BALLOTING

REF: BRASILIA 9507

1. ACCORDING TO ALL REPORTS THE NOVEMBER 15 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WERE HELD QUIETLY DESPITE SOME ISOLATED INCIDENTS WHICH REQUIRED POLICE INTERVENTION. ARMY UNITS WERE CALLED ON TO MAINTAIN ORDER IN A FEW MUNICIPALITIES IN GOIAS AND MARANHAO (AARMA REPORTING DETAILS) BUT THE MEDIA IN GENERAL ARE CONGRATULATING THE COUNTRY ON THE ORDER AND CALM WITH WHICH ELECTIONS WERE CONDUCTED. THERE HAVE BEEN THE USUAL CHARGES OF LOCAL ELECTORAL IRREGULARITIES BUT NEITHER SIDE HAS CLAIMED A NATIONAL PATTERN OF ILLEGAL VOTE COUNTING. INDEED, MOST OF THE PROBLEMS REPORTED HAVE BEEN BETWEEN DIFFERENT FACTIONS (SUBLENDAS) OF THE SAME PARTY.

2. EARLY RETURNS SHOW THE MDB DOING WELL IN THE LARGEST CITIES AND ARENA HOLDING THE INTERIOR AREAS, BUT THERE ARE
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SOME INDICATIONS OF ARENA INROADS INTO MDB TERRITORY.

IN PARANA STATE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE MDB IS NOT DOING AS WELL AS EXPECTED IN ITS STRONGHOLD IN THE SOUTHWEST PART OF THE STATE AND ARENA HAS WON IN THE STATE CAPITAL, CURITIBA. IN MINAS GERAIS, ARENA HAS WON IN JUIZ DE FORA AND IS CLOSE TO THE MDB VOTE IN BELO HORIZONTE. THE MDB ALSO APPEARS TO HAVE LOST THE MAYORALTY RACES IN ANAPOLIS, (STATE OF GOIAS) TERES-OPOLIS, (RIO DE JANEIRO), AND PIRACICABA, (SAO PAULO), WHERE THE INCUMBENTS WERE MDB MEMBERS. ON THE OTHER HAND THE CITIES OF PORTO ALEGRE, RIO DE JANEIRO AND SAO PAULO ARE VOTING AS EXPECTED WITH MDB LEADING ARENA NEARLY TWO TO ONE. MOST OF THE CITIES AROUND THE SAO PAULO CAPITAL ALSO APPEAR TO BE GOING FOR THE OPPOSITION PARTY.

3. THE ABSTENTION LEVEL IN RIO DE JANEIRO WAS A LOW THIRTEEN PERCENT (WHICH HELPED THE MDB) BUT MAY BE RUNNING OVER 20 PERCENT IN THE NORTH AND NORTHEAST. THERE ARE AS YET NO RELIABLE FIGURES ON THE LEVEL OR NUMBER OF BLANK AND NULL BALLOTS BUT THE SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL SIGNIFICANTLY REMINDED ELECTION OFFICIALS THAT IS IS ILLEGAL TO DIVULGE WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN WRITTEN ON NULL BALLOTS.

4. COMMENT: WHILE OVERALL TOTALS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR SOME TIME AND NO DEFINITIVE TRENDS ARE APPARENT, THESE EARLY RETURNS SUGGEST THAT ARENA WILL HAVE AT LEAST THE EXPECTED 70 PER CENT OF THE MAYORS, AND THAT ARENA IS RUNNING REASONABLY WELL, WITH BETTER THAN EXPECTED PERFORMANCES IN SOME PREDICTED AREAS OF WEAKNESS. END COMMENT.
CRIMMINS

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